Trope: Stranded Together (Jon Jensen/Mortimer Granville)

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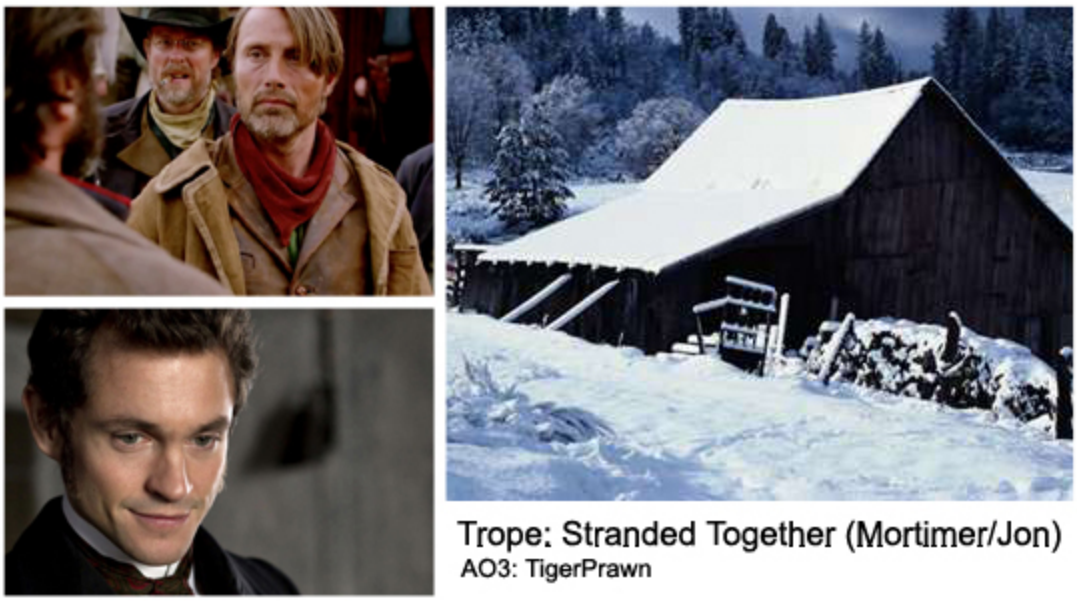
by TigerPrawn

Summary

1881 ~ Jon Jensen has spent a decade alone since the death of his family. Now relocated to the Yukon, he agrees to be a guide for an English doctor travelling through the area. In a world where less than 1% of the population are non-beta, both alpha Jon and omega Dr Mortimer Granville have a few surprises in store when they end up stranded together in the frozen wilderness.

Chapter 1



Jon stopped mid sentence. His nose twitched. There was a scent in the air totally unfamiliar to him but at once strangely alluring. Comforting and warm. It reminded him of a time that never was - what he had imagined life would be like once his family arrived in America, but it was never to be. A bittersweet ache surged within him.

“Jon?” Carson, the store clerk, was looking at him curiously.

“What? Sorry, I was distracted.” Distracted was an understatement; he had to force the words out, so foggy the scent had made him.

“I said, I can have this all ready to go in an hour and you, I think, were saying you would swing by for them in the morning instead.” Carson spoke patiently and smiled. Jon knew how he was perceived - quiet, distant but polite. But with something slightly off about him. Usually put down to his mysterious past that was rumoured to be tragic. He never spoke of it himself - of the Second Schleswig War, coming the America, the horror of losing his family and all that hate and death in Black Creek. It had been locked inside of him for years, bleeding out bit by bit until there was only a hollow feeling.

“Yes. That's it.” Jon confirmed, his frown easing into a polite smile. It was unlike him to be distracted like this. And of all times, now was not good. It was the last chance he might get this winter to pick up supplies before heading back into the wilderness that had become his home. He had been nomadic for some years, trying to escape his past before he realised it was a futile effort. He had gone north and for the past two years had taken work fur trapping. It was good work and he made enough money to live. If it could be called living. He shook the thought from his head.

“I have been engaged to guide an Englishman up to Rockton on my way home, so I will be prompt.”

Carson nodded and started to stow the goods Jon had placed on the counter, to add to the bigger provisions already set aside. “Not a problem.”

The snow would arrive soon and he'd lose that work if he were stranded in this town. Two days trek would get him to Rockton; a little further to his own home. This night he would spend at the saloon before setting off at first light. He'd beat the snow and be prepared for the long winter solitude.

*

Mortimer Granville refused to be disheartened. He hadn’t trained in medicine and made a point of learning all the latest thinking on germ theory and a variety of other medically relevant sciences, to be put off by a string of job dismissals and rejections by doctors who would rather let their patients die than read the latest science. He refused to be disheartened by the fact that his name was mud in London, and chances of future employment were slimmer than ever. Unfortunately, whilst he was discreet about being omega, some doctors clearly knew something wasn’t quite *right* with him - which didn’t help his reputation at all. He had thus far never come across any other omegas, or worse - any alphas - that would be able to scent him and out him immediately. He might wonder if he were actually the only non-beta in the world, but for the medical texts he owned on the subject of his rare kind.

He wasn’t at all surprised that others, like him, preferred to remain secret. Non-betas had been subject to a genocide in centuries long past. With the probability of beta parents producing a non-beta being statistical low, alphas and omegas were rare. Any that surfaced in the centuries since the genocide were the subject of medical and scientific curiosity. It had been his own reason for pursuing medicine. Better to hide amongst them, as well as his own curiosity about his kind. Discretion was a necessity, especially as historically it had been known for omegas at least, to become essentially enslaved - kept in confinement like precious things. Prized possessions now that there were so few of them.

Mortimer was wary the entire journey to the Americas. He had decided that perhaps it was the place to make a fresh start with then ten thousand pounds his friend Edmond had thrust upon him. Surely the frontier folk were always looking for qualified doctors and would be more amenable to the latest theories if it improved a hard life? He had corresponded with a doctor that was expecting him, to take up a post in the wilderness.

He had made it almost the entire journey and as far as a town a little south of the Yukon, before even coming across a non-beta.

Or at least his scent.

He had entered a local store to buy some supplies for the rest of his journey and the scent had caught him immediately. It was earthy and deep, rich. It made him want to curl into its warmth - which was comforting but also terrifying in how it stripped inhibitions. He had read the little known, and subsequent speculation, about the effects alphas and omegas had on each other. But with them so far and few between many went their whole lives with no experience of it. He was so overwhelmed and surprised by the experience that he left the store immediately and returned to his room at the saloon, hoping to have a later chance to

collect a few items before he had to meet with the man Doctor Harrison in Rockton had arranged as his guide.

*

Jon had not slept well. It was as though that strange scent had followed him around for the rest of the day. The saloon, and even his room, seemed permeated with it. Although he found the scent comforting at first, there grew to be a raw edge to it. He wasn't sure how to feel about the fact that the scent was arousing, and trying to ignore his arousal made for an uncomfortable and restless night. In the morning he wondered that maybe he should have just given into that strange urge, but it wasn't a baser urge he indulged in often. Not anymore.

It was easy to ignore those baser instincts when grieving, when it felt like the grief would never end. Until it did. Until each day had become less of a struggle. Each memory became less frequent and less painful. Until the grief had become guilt.

He cursed his biology. He knew enough from his alpha father - what he had learned and in turn taught Jon - alphas were meant for omegas. With every generation fewer were born and now there were so few. It didn't mean that no love could be found with a beta, as with his mother and father, just that there was no bond. Without that bond it was hard for an alpha or omega to hold onto something tangible. More so, it seemed, if there were only memories remaining. Instead biology had them searching for a bond, and it would fade everything and everyone else out that didn't qualify. Even when it had been the woman he loved, the mother of the child he barely knew.

He lived with the fading memories, lived with the sadness their fading brought. Weighing him down as well as, and eventually instead of, the grief he had initially felt. The grief he *wanted* to feel. He had loved her - they hadn't needed a biological imperative, a bond, to drive that love. But now she was lost to him in every way. All that was left was the solitude of life in the wilderness.

And that scent.

It lingered as he began to get ready for the day. He had even checked his clothing in case the scent was there - something he had picked up - but it was not. It was as though it lingered within him and the thought of that was painfully warming.

*

Mortimer woke aroused.

As an omega, it wasn't especially common. It happened occasionally, especially when he was a teenager, but not so much in recent years. He knew that he had to immediately put it down to the scent that had followed him around the rest of the day. It felt like he could reach out and touch it - like it was in the next room.

He had gone to bed and slept soundly - felt warm and comforted. One word resounding around his hindbrain as he felt the scent surround and engulf him - *alpha*

Was this what it felt like to be near an alpha? Any alpha or a specific one? Scientifically, it was entirely fascinating.

He eased back on the bed, stretching in the warmth that still surrounded him, allowing his hand to wander to his crotch. He was just about to slip his hand under his pajamas when he heard the occupant of the next room moving around. He hesitated, unsure how much noise could be heard through the walls. By the time the person vacated the room the urge, and his arousal, had passed.

All very interesting. It made him start to wonder that he shouldn't have been so quick to leave the store when the scent first hit him. For scientific reasons.

It was early so he was able to pack at his leisure before heading down to the store - where it had been arranged for a guide to meet him. The stage coach didn't travel so far north, so they would be riding. It was an adventure, to be sure, but Mortimer knew he really did need to seek out warmer clothing from the store before they set off, after having failed to do so the day before.

He had his luggage brought down from the saloon and went into the shop. The store clerk was pleasant and helped him a great deal. Mortimer knew enough to understand the need for proper and insulated clothing. He hadn't truly considered the reduced mobility of being bundled up in furs. The journey ahead felt like it might be longer for it, but he tried to remain positive.

By the time he exited the store his bags had been secured to a sturdy looking sled attached to an equally sturdy looking brute of a pony. Beside it waited two horses.

Mortimer gave a satisfied nod and was about to search out the guide who had no doubt done this, when an imposing man as bundled as himself moved around the sled. Mortimer walked forward, putting his hand out.

"Doctor Granville, Mortimer Granville… I believe you are my guide to Rockton? Mister?"

"Jon." The man said, looking at Mortimer's hand but not taking it. He turned back to the sled and finished tying something down. "The snow is coming. We leave immediately."

Mortimer nodded. He wasn't put off by the man's gruffness. He'd known worse and they only had to keep each other's company the two days to Rockton.

*

They hadn't talked for hours beyond simple necessities. They didn't stop to eat but instead the man gave him some jerky and a flask of something that burned his throat though he couldn't place what the alcohol was.

It was late afternoon when the Jon's cursing pulled Mortimer's attention.

"The storm is moving too fast." Jon pointed at the horizon. In the very far distance blackness amassed.

“We can take shelter perhaps?” Mortimer asked.

Jon shot him a look that seemed as much like annoyance as Mortimer had encountered. “Of course.” Jon huffed. Mortimer wondered if he had taken offense. Perhaps he perceived Mortimer as a doctor thinking he knew better. Jon seemed like a proud man from the way he carried himself, so maybe it was that.

At least Mortimer knew better than to try and correct the perception - he'd found that often made things worse.

“There is a shack of an acquaintance I had planned for us to use as shelter tonight. It is halfway to Rockton. We may not make it that far if the storm moves closer.” Jon informed him without looking back at all.

“Could we… could we not shelter in a tent if necessary? You must have one on the sled?” Mortimer asked.

At that Jon did pull up his horse and turn to glare at Mortimer. “I have a tent. But I do not recommend it.”

“No?” Mortimer was as curious for the answer as he was about the sharp look Jon was giving him.

Jon looked at him with something close to impatience. “Not unless you wish to freeze to death.” He pulled up his horse and carried on at a fast trot leaving Mortimer to catch up.

It was over an hour before Mortimer started to truly become worried. The temperature had dropped so much that even his furs were becoming ineffectual. The wind whipped around them and Mortimer didn't need the guide to tell him that the storm was almost upon them. The sky was darkening and fear started to really grip him.

Doctor Harrison had explained the hostility of the environment but Mortimer had romanticised it until now - frontier medicine. That may have been a mistake.

Snow set in and suddenly Jon was wordlessly beside him, taking the reins of his horse so that he was leading Mortimer’s horse with his own. Another rope was tied across his chest and trailing back - Mortimer guessed - to the sled pony. Visibility was now almost impossible, a few minutes later and he could barely even make out Jon. How would they find the shack?

“Can you find your way?” Mortimer tried to keep the fear from his voice. He received only a disgruntled huff in return.

By the time Jon pulled their horses to a stop, Mortimer couldn't see a thing. He felt hand grip and pull him from his horse. He allowed himself to be bundled along in the snow, his feet sinking and balance precarious. A minute later he was pushed forward and found himself in a wooden shack. The whooshing he hadn't even registered now vanished and left him with a ringing in his ears.

As the minutes passed he took in the room - there was a woodburner in the centre next to which stood a metal tub presumably for bathing. Shelving and cupboards along one wall and in one corner a table with 3 chairs. In another was a bunk bed. For being described as a shack it seemed comfortable enough for a night.

A door opposite the one he had entered banged open and Jon, caked with snow, strode in. Mortimer could see past him that the door lead directly into a stable where all three horses looked as comfortable as could be expected as snow melted from their hides.

Jon removed a layer, including hat, gloves and scarf, throwing them into the metal tub for the snow to melt off. “I must see to the horses before they freeze.” He said before leaving again and shutting the door behind him.

Mortimer took his lead and started to remove layers. The snowy top layer he placed into the tub then moved over to the bunk and started to place the next layer on the lower bed. He was still in one coat atop his clothes, when Jon returned, this time carrying firewood.

He went immediately to the burner and began stoking it, lighting some kindling before looking up. His expression was puzzled and he sniffed the air. He pulled open the thick fur he was wearing, fully exposing his face, and sniffed again. This time he inhaled deeply and his face became serene as his eyes closed. When they reopened they immediately found and locked onto Mortimer’s as he breathed out one word -

“Omega.”

*

Mortimer stilled. An instinct.

Jon stilled too. From his expression it seemed more from sheer bewilderment than anything else. What do they do now? Jon slowly began to move again, undoing the rest of the massive fur he was wearing and letting it fall off him, shrinking his size, though he was no less imposing. The scent immediately hit Mortimer, the same one he had come across in the store and had plagued him, albeit somewhat delightfully, in his room.

It was curious how the scent seemed to expand into the room and cloud around him. He wondered what effect he was having on the alpha.

They studied each other in silence. Jon was tense; he looked uncomfortable. If Mortimer’s scent was having the same calming effect, it didn’t show. As the man had proved so far prickly, that might not mean much.

“I’ve… never met another non-beta before.” Jon broke the silence. He seemed both restrained and nervous.

“Neither I.” Mortimer admitted. He was smiling, he actually felt a little giddy. All his concern about meeting another non-beta melted into the thrill of scientific discovery. “Isn’t it wonderful? I hadn’t expected this when I came to the Americas, but scientifically speaking, this is… well, the papers that could be written. It’s been some time since the last known case

of…" he trailed off trying to recall exactly when it had been. It was perhaps likely that there were alpha and omega couples unknown to science - either in the far reaches of the world or who stayed private to avoid interference. Even so, the odds with such a low percentage…

He was just working it out in his mind when he realised Jon had moved and was approaching him, warily. Mortimer's breath hitched and he stilled - instinct again. Fascinating.

Jon drew up beside him and he found himself tilting his head, exposing his neck. Something very curious in that. He'd never done that before in his life, but he knew from his studies that the scent glands of alphas and omegas were thought to be especially sensitive - they were almost defunct in betas. So perhaps this was an instinctive invitation of some sort?

Mortimer was finding this already completely engrossing, and his mind was jotting down points to include in a paper when he gasped. His mind went blank as Jon pressed his nose to the scent gland Mortimer had exposed to him. It felt more intimate than anything Mortimer had ever experienced before. He had an immediate physical reaction - his cock began to fill and he could feel a moistness between his legs. That had never happened before. Fascinating suddenly became tinged with unsettling.

"Please… don't do that." His voice quivered as he laid a hand on the alpha's chest and pushed him back. Jon went rigid at first and didn't move, a low growl in his throat seemed less of a warning and something more primal that Mortimer found equal measures terrifying and arousing. A moment later he complied, leaving Mortimer's heart racing and mind reeling as he stepped back.

He wanted to ask the alpha how he was feeling; he had wanted to see if they could make notes. Be objective and use this for study, but another low sound rumbling through Jon's throat stole away any thoughts as he replied, instinctively, with a purr.

*

Jon felt alien to himself and yet whole for the first time. As though discovering a side of himself he had never known and now wished to embrace, despite how terrifyingly strange it was to react on instinct.

The doctor was attractive, but they had barely spoken. And yet his body responded in a way it never had before to anyone, not even to… the thoughts were gone before they entered his head. And he felt at ease with that for the first time. He had loved his wife, but he was suddenly very aware that it was nothing compared to finding an omega. And that was neither his fault or his wife's. It just was. It was biology.

When he had leaned in to scent the man, he had wanted to bite. When the omega had pushed him back, he had wanted to claim. Both thoughts had shocked him enough to bring him back to his senses. And then the doctor purred and something inside Jon broke. That calm reserve that had served him well for many years, felt tattered. He was vulnerable and exposed, and yet he felt safe.

"I want you." He told the doctor. "In a way I have never felt before. Is that what happens?" He was met with an almost blank stare so he shrugged and continued as though floodgates

had opened - “At first it was physical, I wanted to take you, but when I realised myself… I have this instinct to provide for you, to protect you. I can smell you, smell your arousal and I know what to do about it and I want that in a way I’ve never wanted anything before. Is that right?” He wasn’t sure if he was saying it as much to himself as the omega.

“I want you too.” Mortimer breathed out the words, he seemed to shake out of some sort of stupor. “I want you to take me, claim me, bite me… I want you to… to breed me.” A blush crossed Mortimer’s cheeks with the admission. “I don’t know if we should give into it?”

“No.” The realisation that they were aware and had a choice in this sobered Jon a little. “No, I don’t want that. I don’t know you. It’s not something… I don’t easily…”

Mortimer was nodding. “I understand. I agree. We can control this, so we should. For the sake of decency if nothing else.” He straightened up, though he looked slightly uncomfortable, he shifted strangely and each time he did caused a fresh wave of scent to blossom up into the air around them. Jon’s breath shuddered as he realised the thick honeyed scent of the omega’s arousal.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

And then time passes...

Chapter Notes

Apologies about the formatting. Spawnling is sick and we've ended up in hospital for him to have fluids since yesterday (happy new year us!), do I'm just posting this from my phone now he's sleeping and it doesn't like the formating. I'll try and fix it when we're home from the hospital - hopefully tomorrow.

EDIT: Spawnling doing great, we're now home from hospital and he is on the mend. Formatting now fixed XD

They had talked a lot. Not easily at first. Perhaps easier once Mortimer had pulled out a notepad and started to jot notes. Writing it as a scientific paper made it easier for Jon, that was clear. It made it easier for Mortimer too, allowed him to detach from the deluge of emotions, instincts and physical cravings.

Even so it was intense as days turned to weeks. Trapped together.

The snow had stopped after two days, it had taken another two to shift enough to be able to open the door. The fresh air had been a welcome relief as their mingled scents had become oppressive and heated. But that was as far as they got. The snows had come, they were cut off now for the winter - there was no way to make it further to Rockton until the thaw. Jon had explained with some frustration, that despite being only a day north, the terrain as too unforgiving to chance it in the snow.

Days of something uneasy slowly became weeks of something else. Not domestic, but a routine at least. Jon would ice fish in a nearby stream, he would care for the horses, bring firewood to dry and burn. Mortimer busied himself with observing and writing. He wrote every little detail of how his body was changing, hormones that he had not before produced or experienced the effects of. He wrote about the effects they had on each other, the urges he felt but they had not yet acted upon. They had discussed them on occasion, though it had taken a while to draw Jon out.

Mortimer wrote and wrote. Buried himself in science so as to ignore the myriad of thoughts and emotions that threatened to consume him. He ignored them whilst channelling them into

the most thorough anthropological study ever written on alphas and omegas.

In the beginning Jon had been sullen and distant. He was clearly used to being a loner, but equally clearly battling something within himself. As much as he might prefer to be alone, Mortimer had a good sense that Jon fought daily the urge to let himself become friendly with him.

Some days had passed in almost complete silence. Others they would sit in front of the woodburner and Jon would tell him of his childhood - growing up with an alpha father. Mortimer wrote all that down too, a completely different perspective to his entirely beta upbringing.

After two weeks or so they had grown to know each other's habits and fallen into an easy routine. It had been comfortable and nice. He would catch Jon smiling for no reason, but it would desert the man if noticed.

There was something between them, so it felt to Mortimer. Beyond that initial primal attraction that they had ignored and had faded to a dull knowledge in their hindbrains. A friendship was growing - one based in their mutual experience and confinement. One based on a growing interest in each other's habits - Jon taught him to fish and asked to read his work. They discussed it at length and by the end of a month Jon would open up about his own thoughts and feelings and biological changes for Mortimer to note.

In many ways that made things even more intense as they grew to know each other better than they had ever been known by anyone before.

It was when Mortimer caught his first fish, sat bundled in furs upon the ice and reeling in something that would make less than a meal for one, that Jon had laughed and smiled and embraced him - and Mortimer had realised that despite his detachment to their physical proximity, he had fallen in love.

*

Trapped as they were, with no escape from each other, it felt wrong to express his feelings towards Mortimer. A man who made him smile daily. Who he was closer with than any other in his life. His past felt different viewed through this new lens. Over their weeks together he had unconsciously made peace with it - hadn't even realised he had at first.

It would be unfair to tell Mortimer. If the doctor did not feel the same and was forced to remain there, as they were, it would be uncomfortable for him. For them both. He did not want that. Better that he just help with the paper Mortimer worked on, better that he continued to provide for them and the horses, better that he continued to supplement their non-exhaustive supplies. Better that he wait until the thaw, until Rockton where they could part, or perhaps remain.

A fanciful part of him considered them remaining in the shack forever, even after the thaw had come and gone and fresh snow came. Perhaps that was what alphas and omegas did when they found each other? Disappeared, and isolated themselves. It felt right to Jon, but then, being alone was not something he had ever had a problem with. But for Mortimer? He

couldn't say. The omega was a doctor, a man of science who had taught him about germs and the importance of plumbing. Rockton awaited him, and even perhaps once he tired of that, a town or a city where he might become a gentleman of note.

Jon pushed such thoughts from his mind. They were too difficult to dwell on. Unlike his previous and distant life, now he could see no other. He knew that if he and Mortimer were to part ways he would always remember the man; his memories would not fade. They would haunt him in a new and cruel way.

Nightly, as he pulled himself up into the bunk above Mortimer's, he tried to calculate how much time they had before the thaw, and their release from each other. How much longer he had with his omega.

*

The fire was burning low but the blankets on the bunk were thick and heavy. Perhaps that was why Mortimer felt so hot? But not just hot. Not quite sick, but not well. Like there was a tight pain coiling in his gut waiting to spring. He felt feverish, dizzy.

And there was that scent. Jon. Suddenly so intense again after months of growing accustomed to it.

At some point during the night it switched from being comforting and warming as it had once been, through distracting and into mind melting. It was all around him and he couldn't escape it.

He curled in on himself and tried to ignore the slightly nauseous feeling creeping up his throat. His whole body ached as he moved, and he groaned in response. Maybe it was some sort of influenza?

"Are you alright?" Jon's voice had the strange effect of both soothing him and heating him further.

Suddenly the ache that had started in pit of his stomach moved down to his groin. It felt like the ache was beginning to consume him, feeling it spill out of him as slick. He groaned again, his face burning red with embarrassment as the scent of it hit him and he was sure Jon could smell it too. It reminded him of the first night they had been trapped here together - having to consciously control themselves.

"I… I'm sorry." He managed, he tried to get out of the bed, to go clean himself up in the outhouse facilities adjoining the stable. But he felt suddenly too weak to move. He dragged himself forward expecting his body to comply but instead he fell the short drop to the floor.

Moments later Jon was next to him, concern clear in his expression.

"Are you alright?" he asked again.

"Please…" Mortimer tried to smile and wave him away. "I'm fine…" the ache tore into him again and this time he cried out.

“Mortimer.” Jon looked pained, almost as though he were experiencing something similar, or in response. He rested a hand on Mortimer’s clammy forehead and it was cooling. Mortimer arched up into the hand that offered relief.

His brain formed a word and forced it through his mouth before he could even comprehend it - “Alpha…”

And then Jon’s mouth was on his, cool where it should be warm.

*

Jon had lain awake for hours listening to the soft sound of the omega breathing. Trying to ignore his own pulse racing at the heat of the man. The scent of him. Both coming off him in waves that made sleep impossible. That urge to provide and protect grew stronger, and so did his arousal. He had wanted to ignore it. He wouldn't force himself on the omega.

When Mortimer awoke suddenly and was in pain, a stab of something went through Jon. He couldn’t quite name it - protectiveness, fear of loss, need to comfort. He didn’t hesitate in jumping down from his bunk when the omega fell to the floor. He wanted to take him there and then; something within him telling him to do so, driving him on. Somehow knowing that it would help, it was what was needed and required.

And when Mortimer called him *alpha*...

When he kissed him back…

Jon started to frantically pull at his own clothes, and the omegas - so many layers. He freed his own cock, but had to pull his mouth from Mortimer’s in order to work the doctor's trousers down. The omega whined as he did. Jon wasn’t sure it was impatience, maybe frustration, or whether he had hurt the man in some way. The sudden thought of it stilled him, cooled his eagerness.

Protect.

He pulled the thick trousers down gently, followed swiftly by longjohns now soaked with both slick and sweat. The omega’s skin beneath was pale and soft, it made Jon’s breath hitch for a moment. He bit down on his lower lip before giving into the temptation to lace kisses across a bare hip.

This time Mortimer let out a low and contented hum and Jon knew he was what the omega needed. Instinct may have informed him, but it was confirmed with every move and noise Mortimer made. He began to work his way up, unbuttoning the thick shirt, helping Mortimer sit so they could pull clothes up and over until he was completely naked, gleaming with sweat.

“You’re beautiful.” Jon found the words pulled from him. They earned him a smile as the omega arched almost in display, laying back on the nest of blankets and clothes that had accumulated on the floor.

*

Mortimer wasn’t used to being called beautiful, and yet he found it warmed his heart. Not so much the words as the sentiment and who said them. This alpha before him. His alpha. That was very clear in his mind. Instinct again, he was sure - a biological drive. Perhaps that was all it had been? Biology fooling him into believing it was love.

He wasn't sure it mattered. He wasn't sure he cared.

At least he understood now. The texts he had read referred to a fertile time for an omega. It was postulated that there would be a biological imperative to mate, and given that no omega was known to go through this having not met an alpha, it would likely be triggered by close proximity to one. Even so, he hadn’t expected the self-lubricating slick, as much biological sense as it made on reflection.

He had an urge to roll onto his front and raise himself to the alpha, but he fought it - such a strange concept to him. Even so he found himself spreading his legs and welcoming Jon between them as he moved back over him to recapture his lips.

He felt Jon’s hardness pressing against his thigh and knew he needed it. Knew deep within him that it was a complete necessity in that moment, to have the alpha inside him. They shifted against each other, lost to passionate nips and kisses. And then Jon was against him, and he felt the slick pooling and they seemed to both instinctively know that everything was as it should be. Jon slid into his tight heat, slow but steady. They both groaned as Jon buried himself within him.

*

Jon stilled. He squeezed his eyes shut and savoured the sensation of being seated completely within the man he had come to love. His omega. It was like nothing he’d experienced before. It was overwhelming. It felt like a fresh start - a new future laid out before him. He took a breath and began to move, slowly thrusting, gentle though deep.

He felt the bulbous sack at the base of his cock - his knot as Mortimer had explained it to be - start to swell.

It had happened before, on some occasions during sex. He knew it was something only alpha’s possessed, but that was as far as his knowledge went. He often cursed it - when it swelled it became painful, made sex uncomfortable as it continually pressed against his partner.

He grit his teeth, willing that not to happen now, so pleasurable this had been so far.

But then Mortimer was scrabbling at him, pulling at the shirt he still wore, trying to take him deeper. Instinct again it seemed as he moaned, “Please Jon, I need you. Please, harder.”

Spurred on he did as asked. He started to thrust hard and deep, until his knot was pressing against Mortimer. He thrust again, and was momentarily blinded by almost painful pleasure

as his knot pushed inside the omega and continued to expand as Mortimer let out a surprised sound of pleasure.

They both stopped. Panting, clutching each other. Mortimer's expression gave away the pleasure he felt and suddenly he was cumming and clenching around Jon, squeezing his knot. The pleasure was intense, another contraction of the omega's inner walls had him cumming. Instinctively he started thrusting again, cumming deep within the omega.

*

The knot stretched him, though not painfully - it was the pressure it put on some pleasure point within him, that had Mortimer cry out and cum. It was the most intense sexual pleasure he had ever felt and he knew he needed it, needed more.

He felt Jon cum. And cum again. Finally stilling and collapsing onto Mortimer, that drew a chuckle from the omega. He wrapped his arms and legs around the alpha, feeling sated and relieved. The ache was dull, though it still remained and Mortimer had a good sense that it would worsen once Jon withdrew from him. But as they shifted against each other to settle more comfortably, it became clear that that would not happen immediately. They seemed to make the realisation at the same time, and chuckled together. The now realised purpose of knots on an alpha made scientific sense - given the urges to protect and provide that Jon had mentioned. It was primal, the hindbrain in action, in synchronisation with their biology.

As they lay joined, none of it seemed of importance.

Over the course of three more days and nights, Mortimer felt that painful ache that would only be sated, if temporarily, by Jon. By *his alpha* - his instincts kept screaming at him.

*

It was the middle of the afternoon when Mortimer nudged him awake.

He opened his eyes to see the omega dressed in his longjohns and holding a plate of food.

"I made food." Mortimer seemed nervous despite his smile. "I… uh, I feel much better now. Bloody marvellous actually."

Jon returned his own weak smile and nodded. He sat and pulled on a shirt and underwear as Mortimer placed the plate on the table.

He swung himself off the bottom bunk that they had shared for the last few days. His breath hitched, something akin to panic gripping him when he realised that sharing had come to an end. Mortimer no longer needed him. More than ever, Jon was sure that once the thaw came, he would never see Mortimer again.

The omega frowned at him as he sat, clearly aware something was wrong. Mortimer's face fell and he looked sheepish. "I… I can only apologise Jon. I never knew… I never meant." He sighed. "I'm sorry if you felt coerced by me… or even by instinct. I'm sorry for my part in it."

Jon frowned. ‘You think I didn't want you help you? You think I had no choice?”

“Didn't you?” There was concern there, but hope too.

Jon’s frown deepened. “Did you… did you have a choice?”.

“I'm not sure… I don't think I did.” Mortimer looked saddened by that, but then cocked a brow. “But, having said that, I had a strong sense that it wouldn't have… that this biological event only occurred because…” The omega’s face reddened and he looked away from Jon, down to the food that he pushed around his plate. “because of how I feel about you.”

Jon’s heart was thudding in his chest. He had never expected, as much as he had hoped. He was unable to speak for fear of chasing away the moment.

“I will take an educated guess and say that these events will likely occur at regular intervals from now on. Whether our separation would make them cease I am unsure.” Mortimer’s tone was clinical. “as betas do not possess a knot, it might prove difficult for me, should we part and they continue.”

Jon clenched his jaw and let out a breath he didn't know he had been holding. He concentrated on keeping his tone even as he tried to mimic Mortimer’s detachment “So what do you suggest?” He wondered if they would have to make some arrangement, or perhaps Mortimer would go to a big city in search of medical solutions. He clenched his jaw tighter, feeling like he has trapped the omega after all despite all his intentions to the contrary.

“We stay here. Together.” Mortimer met his eyes then and gave a small smile.

“Remain trapped for necessity.” Jon near growled the words.

Mortimer frowned and shook his head. “No… not just… Remain... not trapped. Remain and write and live and fish. Remain for now until the paper is finished, and then we can go together and live however we need to. Together. Remain, for now. To explore this, not just for science but... because I love you.”

The omega looked suddenly nervous, waiting.

Jon’s face broke into a smile. He leaned over the table and Mortimer did the same to close the space between them. “I love you too.” He murmured as his lips sought the soft skin of Mortimer’s neck - already marked from where he had worried it with nips and kisses over the last few days.

Mortimer sighed in relief and relaxed into his touch. Breath hitching as Jon mouthed at the flesh above his scent gland.

“I wanted to bite you, when we mated, I wanted to bite you.” Jon felt the omega shudder at his confession.

“I… I wanted you to. I want you to.” Mortimer replied, dragging his lips to meet Jon’s in a hungry kiss.

Jon pulled the omega into his lap, crushing them against each other. They would mate again, he knew, and he would bite. It seemed so important that he do it though he was not entirely sure why. He would sink his teeth in and claim the omega. His friend, his lover. His dear Mortimer.

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